

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 are pending, including independent claims 1, 2, 5, 14 and 18. Claims 2-4 remain allowable. All other claims are again rejected over the prior art, but the Examiner has cited some additional references.

Claims 1, 5 and 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Van Kleeck and newly cited U.S. Patent No. 5,177,685 ("Davis"). Davis describes a vehicle navigation system in which spoken navigation instructions may be suppressed if the user is already listening to the radio, playing a CD, or using a cell phone (col. 22, ll. 56-65). However, Applicant's claimed invention generally is directed to providing a user with speech input guidance for commanding the operation of a device, whereas Davis is simply providing navigation instructions to a driver.

Further, the rejections of dependent claims 9 and 10 do not accurately address the features of those claims. Claim 9 recites that when speech input guidance is prevented as described in claim 5, guidance with a screen and/or a confirmation sound indicating that speech input is available is provided. The passages in Van Kleeck cited by the Office Action describe the preferred embodiment in which an interface displays active words that the user may speak to provide a command to the system. Later, Van Kleeck briefly describes (at col. 7, lines 44-46) that instead of listing the active words visually, the system could list them verbally. Van Kleeck does not describe preventing speech guidance as recited in Applicant's claim 5, nor providing guidance with a screen or a confirmation sound when speech input guidance is prevented.

Claim 10 adds to claim 5 that when route guidance for a navigation device is shown on a guidance display screen, speech input guidance on the same screen is prevented. This feature is not disclosed in the cited art, and the Office Action does not explain how this feature is allegedly obvious in view of the cited art.

Claims 14 and 20 are rejected as obvious over Van Kleeck and newly cited U.S. Patent No. 6,778,970 ("Au"). The Office Action concedes Van Kleeck does not disclose that when a user enters only one of an operation object and the content of an operation, the device provides a speech input executing command corresponding to the other. However, the Office Action asserts that Au suggests this feature. Applicant disagrees. Au is directed to "a computer system using a model of intentionality which seeks to

semantically analyze conversational input, and to optimize that analysis." The main object is "to support, in computer systems, conversational communications capabilities which humans commonly have." (Col. 1, ll. 34-38; col. 9, ll. 25-27.) Thus, Au has nothing to do with Applicant's claimed invention, does not suggest it, and is not even directed to a similar problem.

The specific passages cited in Au are not applicable. The passage at col. 56, ll. 32-45 describes Fig. 61 which shows semantic component classes for sentences (see col. 55, l. 50, et seq.). The Office Action quotes a section stating that different languages can have a different ordering rule for subject, verb and object. The passage at col. 58, ll. 37-40 describes how a sentence (in Fig. 63) can be interpreted, but the correct ordering rule must be used by the parser according to the language. Thus, the cited passages have nothing to do with a speech input guidance device or providing a user with speech input executing commands, much less the specific limitation of claim 14 that the Office Action agrees is absent in Van Kleeck.

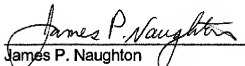
Claim 18 is rejected as obvious over Van Kleeck, Davis, Cohen, and newly cited U.S. Patent App. Publ. 2003/0091176 ("Feldes"). The Office Action agrees that Van Kleeck, Davis and Cohen do not disclose that a speech input guidance output unit provides a guidance output of a command in a form different from that of the other commands when the count for the speech input executing command is more than a predetermined number. However, the Office Action asserts that the feature is found in Feldes. Applicant disagrees. Feldes describes a system for allowing a user to interact with the Internet by using a telephone (e.g., Title; Abstract; Par. 1). The system is able to convert the content of a page stored by an information server into an acoustic representation that is transmitted to the user over the telephone, and can recognize commands entered by the user via the telephone (e.g., Pars. 8-10, 12). Par. 33, cited by the Office Action, describes that if a page of information includes more than a predetermined limit of branch options (links), they can be read to the user in groups instead of individually.

This does not disclose the identified feature of claim 18. Among other things, Feldes does not count outputs "for the individual speech input executing commands" as claimed, but rather counts all branch options together. Likewise, Feldes does not

compare a count for a particular speech input executing command against a predetermined number. Further, Feldes does not provide a branch option in a different form. Whether it is read to the user alone or as part of a group, the same branch option is still read to the user.

In summary, Applicant submits that the cited references do not affect the patentability of the pending claims. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application. If the Examiner believes the application still is not in condition for allowance, she is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James P. Naughton", is written over a horizontal line.

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